

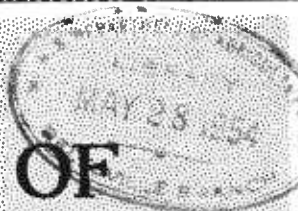
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
FARMERS' BULLETIN No. 619

BREEDS OF
DRAFT HORSES



THE PRODUCTION of high-class draft horses for breeding purposes has, in recent years, assumed special importance in the United States. Formerly it was customary for breeders to import annually many stallions and mares of the draft breeds from such countries as England, Scotland, Belgium, and France. Because of the greatly depleted foreign supply, breeders in the United States are now dependent on draft horses raised in this country for their seed stock.

The purpose of this publication is to present in a concise manner the most important features of the breeds of draft horses in this country. No attempt has been made to give a history of the breeds or information about the early types, as such information would require considerable space and would be of little value to the general reader. For information regarding the rules of registry and the issuance of stud-books and for lists of breeders the reader is referred to the various associations.

Though encouraging the development of improved types of horses and other livestock, the Bureau has no jurisdiction over the registration of animals or the operation of the respective associations.

BREEDS OF DRAFT HORSES

By SANFORD R. SPEELMAN, *associate animal husbandman, Animal Husbandry Division, Bureau of Animal Industry*¹

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POINTS OF THE DRAFT HORSE

THE draft type of horse (fig. 1) is characterized by massiveness, and the particular field for this type is the hauling of heavy loads at a comparatively slow gait, usually at the walk. Therefore power and not speed is desired, and in order to possess this power the horse should be generally blocky or compact, low-set or short-legged, and sufficiently heavy to enable him to throw the necessary weight into the collar to move the heavy load and at the same time maintain a secure footing.

The market requirements classify draft horses according to weight, quality, and utility into heavy draft, light draft, and loggers. The best heavy horses, classified as heavy drafters, stand from 16 to 17½ hands high (a "hand" being 4 inches) and weigh from 1,750 to 2,200 pounds. The light draft horses are similar in type to the heavy draft horses but are smaller. They range in height from 15¾ to 16½ hands and in weight from 1,600 to 1,750 pounds. The loggers are big, rugged horses suitable for lumbering work. Although as large and heavy as the heavy draft horses, they are plainer and sometimes slightly blemished or unsound. The range in height and weight for loggers is practically the same as for heavy drafters.

Chunks, essentially little drafters, are classified chiefly from the standpoint of conformation but are usually more blocky and compact. The eastern chunk is of true draft-horse conformation, but with less height and weight, ranging in height from 15 to 16 hands and in weight from 1,300 to 1,550 pounds. Farm chunks, commonly known as general-purpose horses, are not quite so heavy nor so good in quality as the eastern chunks. Farm chunks range in height from 15 to 15¾ hands and in weight from 1,200 to 1,400 pounds.

In the typical drafter the head is comparatively lean, wide between the eyes, and in size proportionate to the body. The eye is bright and fairly prominent. The neck is strong and muscular, of fair length, and somewhat arched; in the stallion it is well arched or crested, in the gelding or mare less so. The shoulders are shorter and more

¹ This is a revision of former editions by G. A. Bell, who resigned in 1920.

upright than those of the light horse, and a happy medium between the straight and sloping shoulder gives the best combination of power and movement. Too straight a shoulder causes excessive concussion, and the result is bone and tendon trouble in the feet and legs. On the other hand, too sloping a shoulder renders it difficult to fit the heavy collars properly. In the draft horse, however, the former is much more common than the latter.

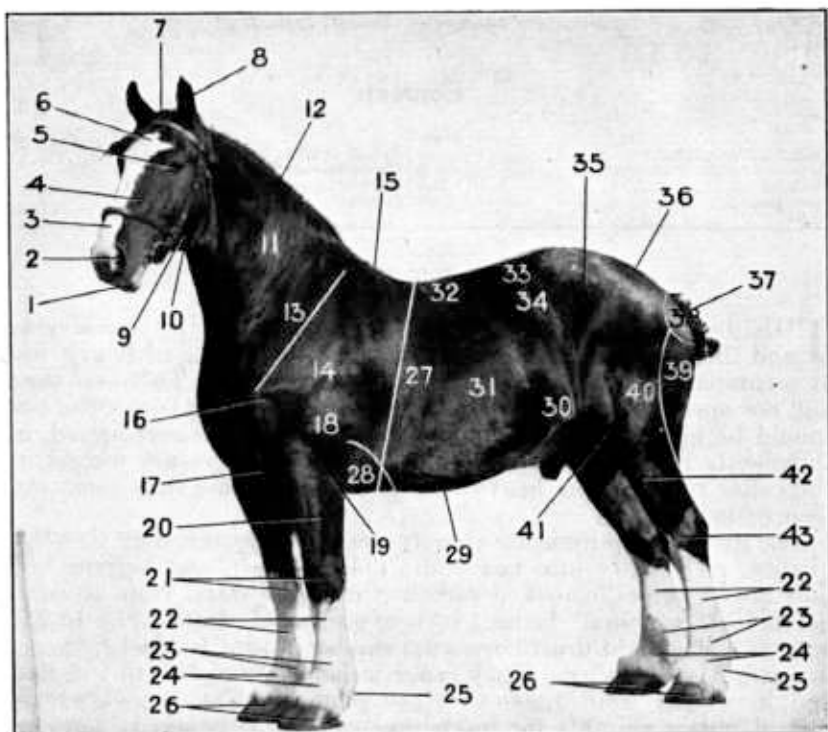


FIGURE 1.—The points of the horse: 1, Mouth; 2, nostril; 3, nose; 4, face; 5, eye; 6, forehead; 7, poll; 8, ear; 9, lower jaw; 10, throatlatch; 11, neck; 12, crest; 13, shoulder bed; 14, shoulder; 15, withers; 16, point of shoulder; 17, breast; 18, arm; 19, elbow; 20, forearm; 21, knees; 22, canons; 23, fetlocks; 24, pasterns; 25, feather; 26, feet; 27, heart girth; 28, foreflank; 29, underline; 30, hind flank; 31, barrel; 32, back; 33, loin; 34, coupling; 35, hip; 36, croup; 37, tail; 38, buttock; 39, quarters; 40, thigh; 41, stifle; 42, gaskin; 43, hock.

The chest is deep and comparatively broad, thus providing plenty of room for the lungs. The heart girth, or the body's circumference behind the forelegs, is large, and horses slack in that region are usually weak in constitution. The body is broad, deep, and comparatively short; the back is short and broad and the ribs well sprung, giving a round appearance to the body. The horse with a shallow body is usually a poor feeder. The loin is broad and well muscled; the croup is fairly level, long, broad, and well muscled. A short, decidedly sloping croup is not so well muscled as the straighter and longer one. The hind quarters and thighs are well muscled; it is from the hind quarters that the horse obtains most of its propelling power, the front legs acting largely as weight carriers.

SCORE CARD FOR THE DRAFT HORSE

SCALE OF POINTS

GENERAL APPEARANCE—18 points

	<i>Standard score</i>
Height: Estimated hands -----; actual hands -----	
Weight: Estimated -----; actual -----; according to age and type	4
Form: Broad, deep, massive, well proportioned, low set	4
Quality and substance: Abundance of clean, flat bone; broad, well-defined joints and tendons; refined head and ears; fine skin and hair; feather, if present, silky	6
Temperament: Energetic, good disposition	4

HEAD AND NECK—7 points

Head: Proportionate, medium size, clean cut; wide lower jaw	1
Forehead: Broad, full	1
Eyes: Large, prominent, bright, clear	1
Muzzle: Broad, fine; large nostrils; trim, even lips	1
Ears: Of medium size, well-set, carried alert	1
Neck: Medium long, muscular; good crest; clean throatlatch	2

FOREHAND—26 points

Shoulders: Sloping, muscular, blending into smooth withers	3
Arms: Short, muscular, elbow in	1
Forearms: Wide, muscular	2
Knees: Straight, wide, deep, well supported	2
Cannons: Short, wide, lean, flat; large, well-defined tendons	2
Fetlocks: Wide, straight, tendons well back, well supported	1
Pasterns: Of medium length, oblique (about 45°), clean, strong	3
Feet: Large, round, set straight; dense, smooth horn; slope of wall parallel to pastern; wide heels; concave sole; strong bars; prominent, elastic frog	8
Leg position: In front, a perpendicular line from point of shoulder should divide the leg and foot into lateral halves; from the side, a similar line from the bony prominence on shoulder blade should pass through the center of elbow, knee, and pastern joints, and meet the ground back of foot	4

BODY—9 points

Chest: Deep, wide, large girth	2
Ribs: Long, well sprung, close, strongly coupled	2
Back: Short, broad, heavily muscled	2
Loin: Short, wide, heavily muscled	2
Flanks: Deep, full; long, low underline	1

HIND QUARTERS—30 points

Hips: Wide, smooth, level, well muscled	2
Croup: Long, wide, muscular, not markedly drooping	2
Tail: Set high, well carried	1
Quarters and thighs: Deep, thick, muscular, strongly joined to gaskins	3
Stifles: Muscular, well set	1
Gaskins (lower thighs): Wide, heavily muscled	2
Hocks: Wide, deep, prominent point, clean cut, straight, well supported	6
Cannons: Similar to front except a trifle longer and wider	2
Fetlocks: Wide, straight, tendons well back, well supported	1
Pasterns: Similar to front but less sloping (about 50°)	2
Feet: Similar to front but not quite so large or so round	4
Leg position: From rear, a perpendicular line from point of buttock should divide the leg and foot into lateral halves; from the side, this same line should touch the point of hock and run parallel to the cannon. A similar line from the hip joint should meet the ground midway between the heel and toe	4

ACTION—10 points

Walk: Straight, long stride, springy and balanced	6
Trot: Straight, long stride; free and regular	4

Total ----- 100

Good underpinning, consisting of good legs and feet, is essential. Good, big, clean, heavy bone is necessary in order to afford attachments for the heavy muscles and to stand the wear and tear of hard work. The cannon bones are the best indication of the bone throughout. In this region the bone should feel firm, and the tendons should stand out distinctly from the bone, giving the cannon bones when viewed from the side a wide, flat appearance. The knee should be broad and deep when viewed from the front. The hock should be broad from front to back, and of strong structure. The pasterns should be fairly long and sloping. Though some draft horses possess too long and too sloping pasterns, a much larger number have too short and too straight pasterns. The foot should be fairly large and round and the horn dense. The dark-colored hoofs are most popular, as it is thought they denote greater durability. In the draft horse as much quality as is consistent with the required substance is desirable, but quality should not be obtained at the sacrifice of too much weight.

In temperament the draft horse is generally lymphatic, but he should not be too sluggish. Although the nature of his work requires him to be steady and easily managed, it is nevertheless essential that he perform it willingly and with some snap and vigor.

The draft-horse gait is the walk. The stride should be rapid and of good length, and the feet should be carried straight forward. This kind of action makes possible the covering of the most ground in the least possible time. While the walk is the normal gait, the ability to trot well is desirable. Often faults not noticeable at the walk are brought out at the trot.

BELGIAN

The Belgian draft horse (figs. 2 and 3), as the name indicates, originated and has been developed in Belgium, and is the only breed of horses which is bred to any extent in that country, the light horses used in Belgium being purchased largely in other countries. In 1886 the Belgian Draft Horse Society was organized for the purpose of encouraging the breeding of native draft horses and of maintaining a studbook for the breed. In June of each year the annual show of this society is held at Brussels. At the thirtieth annual show, held in June 1919, the entries totaled more than 800. In 1913 and 1914 the total number of entries for each year was in excess of 1,000. This event is probably the largest show of a single breed of horses ever held in the world. The breeding of Belgian draft horses is also promoted by the Government, which annually awards prizes and subsidies to the best animals in the various Provinces. Stallions which stand for public service must be approved by a commission appointed by the Government.

Importations of these horses into the United States were made more or less frequently during the last half of the nineteenth century, but it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that they were imported in large numbers. The early trade was principally a stallion trade, but later a considerable number of mares were imported.

The Belgian divides honors with the Shire as being the heaviest of the breeds. Mature stallions in fair condition, weighing a ton or more, are comparatively common. In height mature stallions will

probably average slightly over 16¼ hands, and mature mares about 16 hands. In general conformation they are the most compact of all breeds, the bodies being short, wide, and deep. The head is of medium size, the neck is short and heavily crested or arched, the chest is broad and deep, the back is short and well muscled over the loin, the croup is somewhat drooping or steep, and the quarters are full and heavily muscled. The legs are short and free from the long hair or feather characteristic of the Clydesdale and the Shire. In action the Belgian is good, but is less active than the Clydesdale or the Percheron. In temperament he is docile and easily handled. He is a

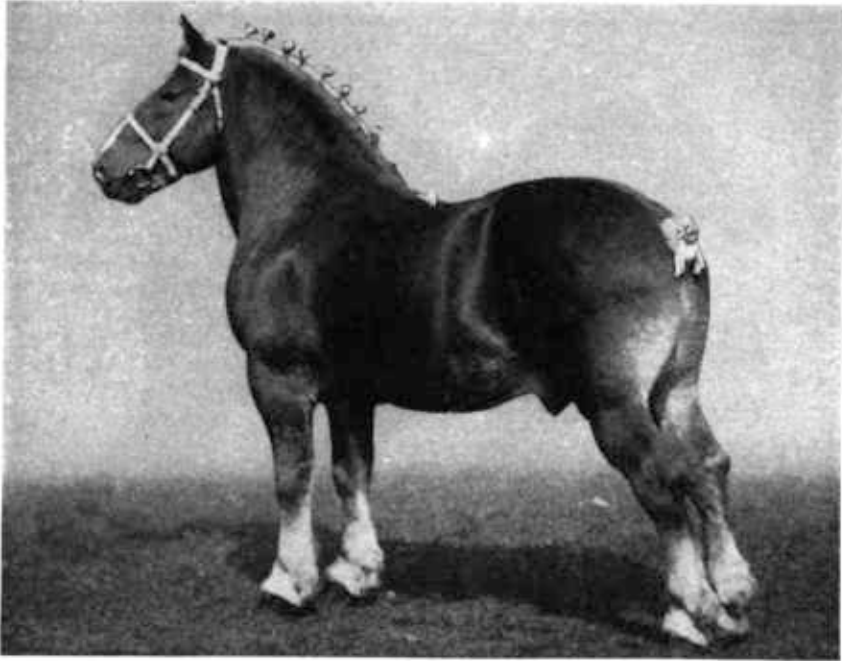


FIGURE 2. — Belgian stallion.

good feeder, is rated as an easy keeper, and stands shipment well. The colors common to the Belgian are bay, chestnut, and roan, but browns, grays, and blacks are occasionally seen.

Some of the criticisms of the Belgian horse are that a large number have necks that are too short and heavy, too drooping a croup, a roughness about the hocks, bone that is not sufficiently flat, too short and straight a pastern, hoof deficient in circumference, and a lack of general quality; but great improvement has been noted in respect to these deficiencies in recent years. The extreme width may cause Belgians to roll somewhat at the walk, but as a class they are good movers at the trot.

In this country the Belgian sire has been valuable in improving the draft conformation of our horse stock, particularly when mated with many of our rangy, loosely coupled mares. The breed has made wonderful progress in this country, considering that it has attracted much attention only since the beginning of the twentieth century.

In fact no breed of horses has shown a greater increase in popularity and a greater improvement during this period.

The distribution of the Belgian draft horse in the United States is widespread, but it is found in the greatest numbers in those sections where the heaviest type of draft horse is most prevalent, such as the Central West, particularly in Indiana, Iowa, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, and Minnesota.

The American Association of Importers and Breeders of Belgian Draft Horses was organized in 1887, but the first volume of its studbook was not published until 1905. Twenty-three volumes have

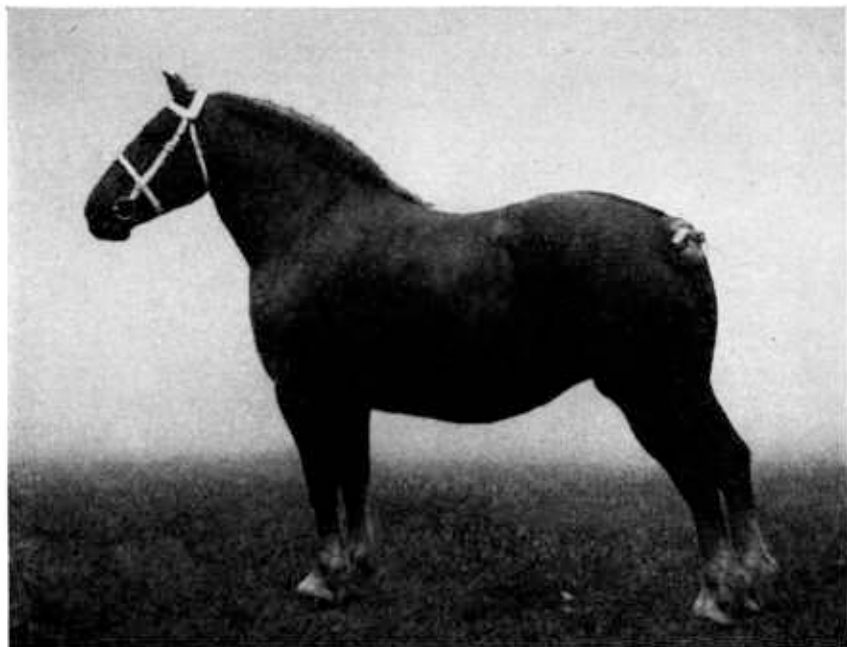


FIGURE 3.—Belgian mare.

been issued, and up to December 31, 1939, 25,378 stallions and 25,476 mares had been recorded. The secretary of the association, which is now known as the Belgian Draft Horse Corporation of America, is H. J. Brant, 161 Ferry Street, Wabash, Ind.

PERCHERON

The Percheron (figs. 4 and 5) originated in France and has been developed in a small district in the northwestern part of that country known as Perche. This district is about one-fifteenth the size of the State of Iowa, and only Percherons born within its boundaries are eligible to registry in the Percheron Studbook of France. Percheron foals, to be accepted for registry in the French book, must be registered during the year of their birth. Prior to such registration they must be examined by an official appointed by the Percheron Horse Society of France, who takes a careful description of their color and markings and brands them on the neck with the letters "S. P." encircled.

The Percheron Horse Society of France was organized in 1883, and in addition to looking after the registration of Percherons it holds an annual summer show in the Percheron district. The society also offers prizes at other shows. The improvement of the Percheron and other breeds in France is due to both public and private efforts. The Government has for a number of years maintained studs in which selected animals have been kept for breeding purposes. In addition, subsidies are granted to private individuals in order to keep high-class horses in the stud. Stallions intended to stand for public service in France must be examined by officials appointed by the Government

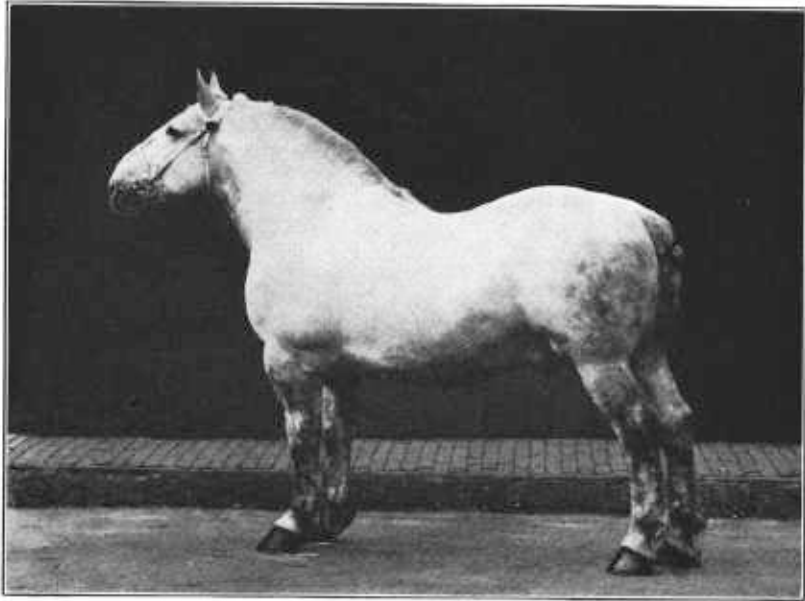


FIGURE 4.—Percheron stallion.

and certified as being free from periodic ophthalmia, or moon blindness, and roaring (thick wind).

The introduction of Percheron horses into the United States dates back many years. One of the early stallions brought to this country which exerted considerable influence on our draft stock was Louis Napoleon imported in 1851 by an Ohio firm. Other Percherons were imported about this time and during succeeding years. During the early seventies they were imported in large numbers, and these importations have continued to the present time.

The head of the Percheron is clean-cut, of medium size, and more refinement is noticed about the head and neck of the Percheron than in any other draft breed. The neck is rather short and well crested. The chest is deep and broad, the back is short, the loins smooth and well muscled. The croup is wide, and on the average is somewhat more sloping than is considered desirable, but great improvement in this respect has been made in recent years. The legs, feet, and bone are on the average good. The legs are free from the long hair

or feather characteristic of the Clydesdale and the Shire. In action the Percheron is good at both the trot and the walk, and the trot is characterized by a snap and boldness not ordinarily displayed by most of the other draft breeds. This breed may be regarded as one of the best movers and is surpassed in style of action only by the Clydesdale.

The Percheron is not so large a horse as either the Belgian or the Shire, but as a class will probably outweigh the Clydesdale slightly. Good, mature stallions in fair condition will usually weigh from 1,800



FIGURE 5.—Percheron mare.

to 2,000 pounds, and there are many which weigh considerably over 2,000 pounds. In height good mature stallions will measure 16 to 17 hands, generally averaging about 16½ hands, but of course there are some under and a few over these heights, although the rangy, tall Percheron is not in demand in this country. The popular Percheron is rather short-legged, compact, and blocky in form, less so than the Belgian, but more so than the Clydesdale or even the Shire.

The colors common to the Percheron are black and gray, although bays, browns, chestnuts, and roans are occasionally seen. It may be safely stated, however, that 90 percent of our Percherons are either black or gray.

Occasionally difficulty may be experienced in deciding whether an animal is a Percheron or a Belgian, but the two types are very distinct. The Belgian is heavier bodied, more compact, shorter legged, and his head is more nearly square in outline; the neck is shorter, more heavily muscled, and more heavily crested. Moreover, the colors common to the Belgian—namely, bay, chestnut, and roan—are

uncommon to the Percheron, whereas the gray and black colors common to the latter are uncommon in the Belgian.

Some Percherons are criticized as having croups too sloping or steep, with the tail set too low. Others are criticized as being too fine—not sufficiently drafty—having a lack of depth and fullness of body. Other faults which are sometimes seen are cannon bones which are rather round (lacking in breadth and flatness), lack of bone for the size of the body, and pasterns which are too short and straight.

The distribution of the Percheron in this country is very widespread, and for years it has been the favorite draft horse. In the United States today Percherons outnumber all other draft breeds combined, and there does not appear to be any diminution in their popularity. This probably is due in part to the good start given the breed by the pioneer importers and breeders, but this popularity must be attributed to some extent, at least, to their general adaptability to the needs and preferences of their owners. For crossing on ordinary mares the Percheron stallion has been very popular, so that grade Percherons are very common and are great favorites in our horse markets.

In 1876 the National Association of Importers and Breeders of Percheron-Norman Horses was organized. The Percheron Society of America, now known as the Percheron Horse Association of America, was an outgrowth of that association. The twenty-third volume of its studbook was issued in July 1936. No later volumes have been published. Up to December 31, 1939, 236,069 animals had been accepted for registration. The secretary is Anne Brown, 809 Exchange Avenue, Union Stockyards, Chicago 9, Ill.

FRENCH DRAFT

The name "French Draft" is applied broadly to all breeds of draft horses originating in France and does not refer to one specific breed, as might be inferred from its usage in this country. This classification includes the Percheron and a number of other draft breeds in France, such as the Boulonnais, Nivernais, Breton, Ardennais, and Picardy. Of all the French breeds the Percheron is by far the best known and has obtained a much greater foothold in this country than any other breed of draft horses. Of the other French breeds, the Boulonnais and the Nivernais are the only ones of any particular interest in the United States.

The Boulonnais is found in northern France in the vicinity of Boulogne and in adjoining districts in Belgium. This breed is probably a trifle larger than the Percheron and somewhat coarser but in general type resembles the Percheron rather closely. The color common to the Boulonnais is gray, but occasionally other colors are seen. This breed has been imported in larger numbers than the Nivernais.

The home of the Nivernais is in central France, in the Department of Nièvre. In type it is very similar to the Percheron. The color is black.

The National French Draft Horse Association of America, which for many years fostered the interests of the French Draft breeds in this country, was organized in 1885 and succeeded the National Nor-

man Horse Association, which had its beginning in 1876. Until its dissolution the National French Draft Horse Association published a studbook in which were registered horses of the French Draft breeds. Fourteen volumes of its studbook were published, and approximately 35,000 animals were registered.

CLYDESDALE

The Clydesdale (figs. 6 and 7) originated and has been developed in Scotland, and is practically the only draft horse found or favored in that country. The breed is of mixed origin, and its early history is more or less obscure.

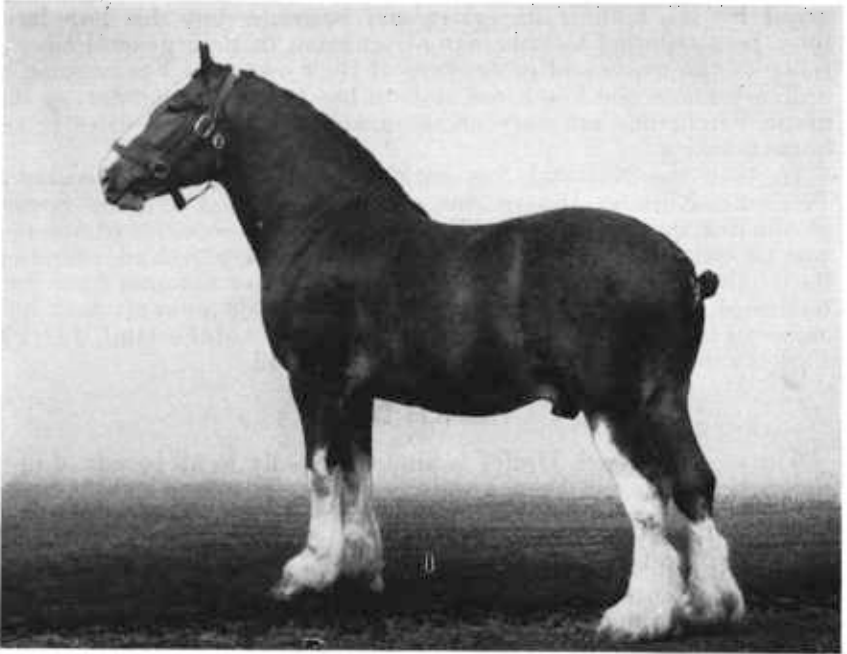


FIGURE 6.—Clydesdale stallion.

In the formation of the breed and during the early stages of the breed's development, however, it is probable that the blood of both Flemish and English horses was used quite largely. For a number of years the Clydesdale has been bred pure. In 1878 the Clydesdale Horse Society of Great Britain and Ireland was organized.

The first Clydesdales brought to North America were probably imported into Canada by the Scotch who had settled there. In the early seventies Clydesdales were imported into this country both through Canada and by direct importation. By 1880 they were being imported in large numbers, and these importations continued for several years.

The Clydesdale is not so heavy as either the Belgian or the Shire, and probably, as a class, will not weigh quite so much as the Percheron. In general conformation, the Clydesdale is more rangy and lacks the width and compactness of the other breeds mentioned.

The Scotch breeders have paid particular attention to legs, pasterns, and feet, but have placed less emphasis on weight than has been the case in other draft breeds. Average mature Clydesdale stallions in this country will probably weigh from 1,700 to 1,900 pounds when in fair condition, with an average height of nearly 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ hands. Mature mares will probably weigh 1,600 to 1,800 pounds and average about 16 hands in height.

No other draft breed equals the Clydesdale in style and action. The prompt walk with a good, long, snappy stride, and a sharp trot with hocks well flexed and carried close together are characteristic

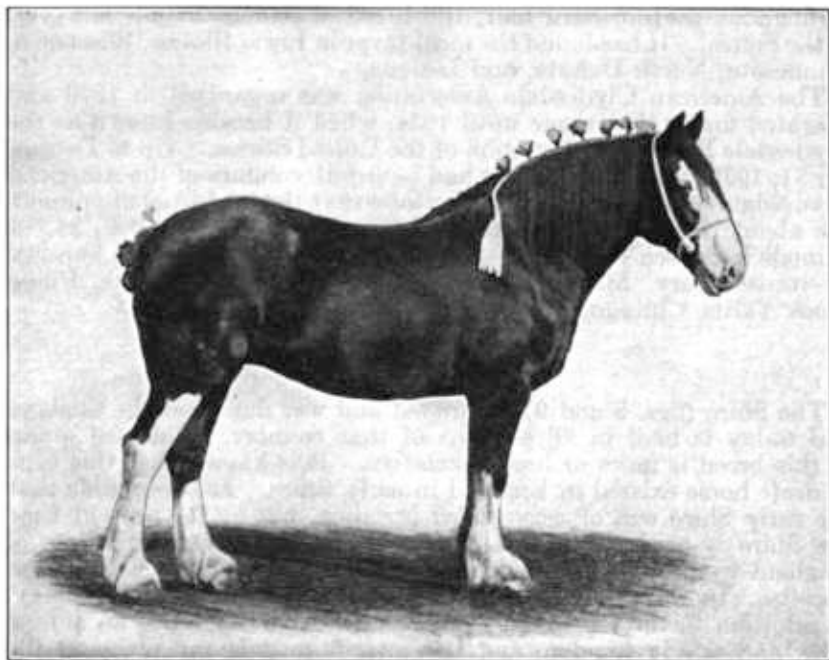


FIGURE 7.—Clydesdale mare.

of this breed. Sound, clean, flat bone; well-set, fairly long, sloping pasterns; large, round feet; and a moderate amount of fine feather or long hair at the rear of the legs below the knees and hocks are important and characteristic features. The colors most common are bay and brown with white markings, but blacks, grays, chestnuts, and roans are occasionally seen. The white markings are characteristic, and it is the exception to see a bay or brown Clydesdale without a white face and considerable white on the feet and legs.

Some of the criticisms of this breed have been the lack of size of body, lack of width and depth, too much feather, and too much white with no regularity of distribution. Most draft-horse users in this country, particularly farmers, dislike a horse with a white face and legs. Nor has the feather been very popular owing to the extra care necessary to keep the legs clean. This, of course, is not so objectionable in those sections where most of the roads are improved.

It is not always easy to differentiate between Clydesdales and Shires, but taking the breeds as a whole, they are very distinct. The Clydesdale is not so heavy bodied as the Shire, has more refinement, and the feather is somewhat more silky or finer and less abundant than in the Shire.

In this country Clydesdale geldings have been very popular in the cities for use by those who want draft horses with a good, long, snappy, ground-covering stride and at the same time possessing style and action. Our native mares of draft character bred to Clydesdale stallions have produced many excellent animals.

The distribution of the Clydesdale in this country is widespread throughout the northern half; the breed is seldom found, however, in the South. It has found the most favor in Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Indiana.

The American Clydesdale Association was organized in 1879 and operated under that name until 1934, when it became known as the Clydesdale Breeders Association of the United States. Up to December 31, 1939, these associations had issued 21 volumes of the American Clydesdale Studbook. It is understood that three additional volumes are about ready for publication, and to December 31, 1939, 24,784 animals had been registered. The business of the society is handled by its secretary, Betty Price, Goff Building, Clarksburg, W. Va.

SHIRE

The Shire (figs. 8 and 9) originated and was developed in England and today is bred in all sections of that country. The real origin of this breed is more or less speculative. It is known that this type of draft horse existed in England in early times. It is probable that the early Shire was of very mixed breeding, but at the present time the Shire is bred very pure. In 1878 the Shire horse breeders of England were organized under the name of the English Cart Horse Society. In 1884 the name was changed to the Shire Horse Society. In addition to the registration of horses, the society holds an annual show and sale in London, and also awards medals and prizes at the leading agricultural shows in England and at some of the fairs and expositions in the United States.

Shires were imported into this country a good many years ago. George E. Brown, in volume 1 of the American Shire Horse Studbook, states that in 1853 a Mr. Strickland imported a stallion direct from England to Aurora, Ill., where the horse was known as John Bull. Volume 1 of this studbook shows the registration of a small number of stallions imported in 1880, and these importations increased until in 1887 more than 400 Shires were imported.

The Shire is a massive horse, with a wide, deep, and long body, and is equaled in weight only by the Belgian. Shire stallions in fair condition weighing 2,000 pounds or over are comparatively common. They are less compact, or more rangy, than the Belgian, and in height will average taller than any other draft breed. Stallions standing 17 hands or more in height are very common; in fact, the average height of mature Shire stallions in this country is close to 17 hands. Mature Shire mares will average about 16¼ hands in height and will.

in fair condition, average about 1,800 pounds in weight. Heavy bone and feather are characteristic of this breed. In temperament the Shire is probably more lymphatic than any of our other breeds, and therefore less active than is desired by many. The common colors are bay and brown, with white markings, although blacks, grays, chestnuts, and roans are occasionally seen.

This breed has been criticized for lack of quality and refinement in general, a sluggish temperament, the abundance of feather, and the large amount of white, but breeders have shown marked progress in

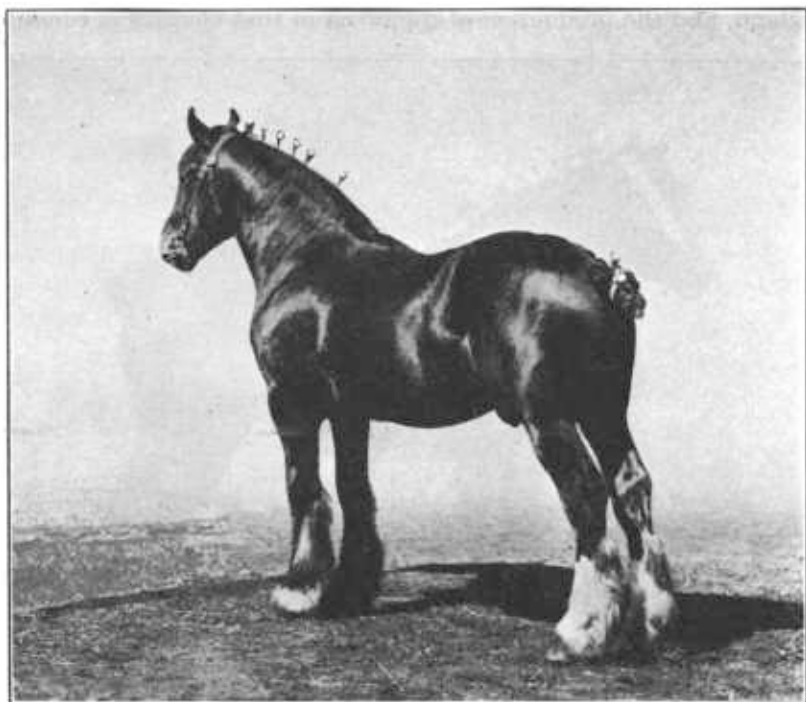


FIGURE 8.—Shire stallion.

overcoming these objections during the last few years. From the standpoint of many users in the United States the abundant feather is objectionable, owing to the difficulty of keeping the legs clean.

Although some Shires and Clydesdales are so similar as to render it difficult at times to distinguish the one from the other, the two types are really very distinct. The Shire is more massive, heavier bodied, throughout, and the feather or long hair on the legs is more abundant and coarser than that of the Clydesdale.

The distribution of the Shire throughout the northern half of this country is widespread, but like the Clydesdale, it is seldom found in the Southern States. This breed has met with the most favor in the Central West, particularly in Illinois, Iowa, and South Dakota; it is also popular on the Pacific coast. A great many of our best market geldings possess some Shire blood; and where height as well as bone

and substance is desired, it can be derived from Shire blood with greater certainty than from other breeds.

The American Shire Horse Association was organized in 1885 and has issued 14 volumes of its studbook. Up to December 31, 1939, 21,712 animals had been registered by the association. The secretary is E. F. Fox, 319 East Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa.

SUFFOLK

The native home of the Suffolk breed is Suffolk County, in eastern England, and the production of the breed in that country is confined

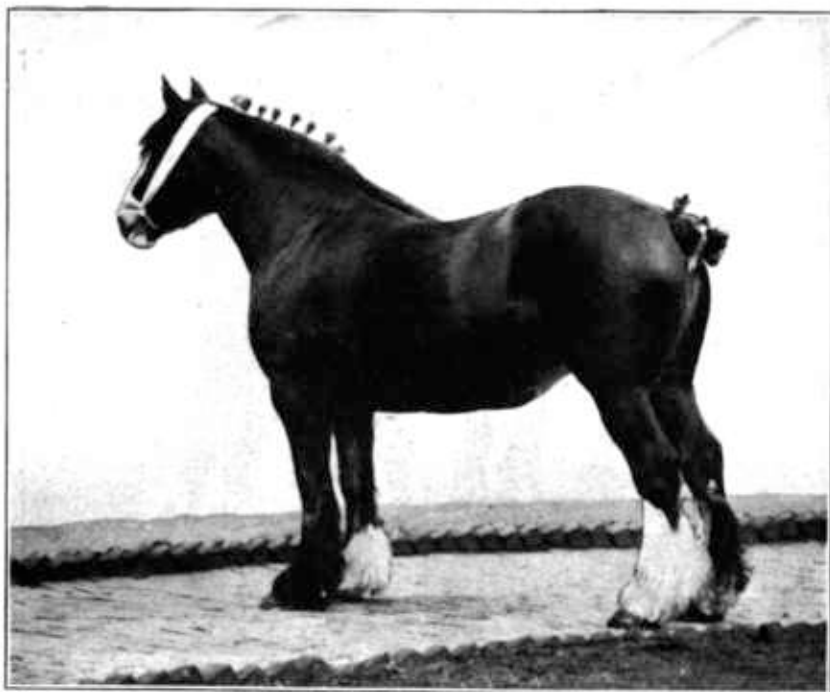


FIGURE 9. Shire mare.

almost entirely to Suffolk and adjoining counties. Some authorities believe the Suffolk originated about A. D. 1700 and that possibly it is a descendant of Normandy horse stock. However, the breed's foundation is usually traced back to a prolific chestnut-colored stallion, known as the Crisp Horse, who was foaled in Sussex in 1768 and is credited with being the progenitor of all stock registered in the English and American studbooks for Suffolk horses. Throughout its relatively long history the Suffolk has been bred pure, and as a consequence the type has generally been kept quite uniform. Moreover, the Suffolk has not been bred for the heavy draft work of the city but largely for the farm, and for this purpose it ranks high among the farmers of eastern England, who consider it capable of doing a large amount of labor on a small quantity of feed and for longer periods than other drafters. The breed is used more exclusively for farm work than are any other of the draft breeds.

In size the Suffolk (figs. 10 and 11) is smaller than other drafters; and though occasionally a mature stallion in fair condition may weigh 2,000 pounds, such a weight is not characteristic of the breed. Considering their size, the Suffolks have deep and wide bodies, and the ribs have a pronounced spring, giving the body a round and full appearance. The croup is straight, the sloping croup being seldom seen in this breed. The quarters are round and well muscled. The legs are short and are particularly free from long hair or feather, and the bone has the appearance of being small as compared with the size of the body. The color is always chestnut, varying from light to

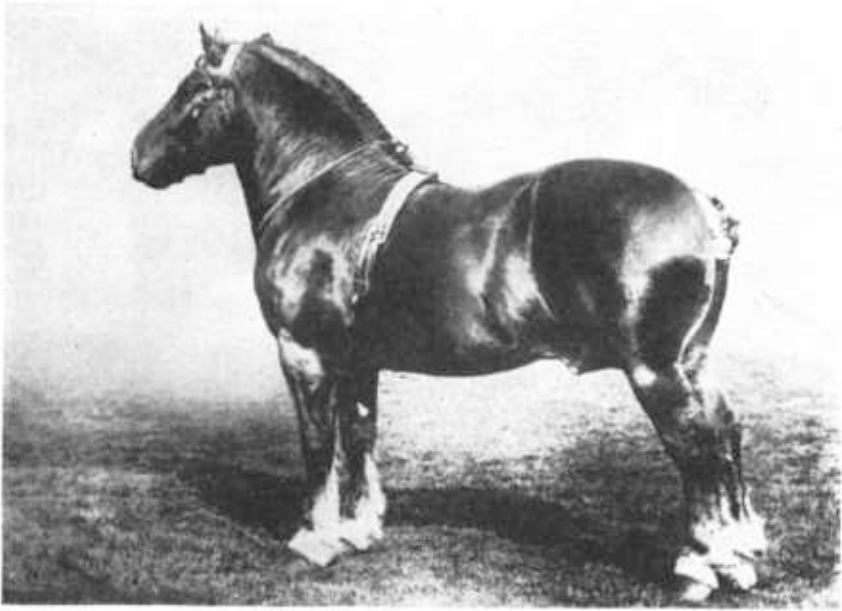


FIGURE 10.—Suffolk stallion.

dark. The Suffolk is active, has a good disposition, and is rated as an easy keeper.

The distinguishing characteristics of this breed may be said to be the invariable chestnut color, with little if any white; their smooth rotund form; and the clean-boned leg, devoid of the feather characteristic of the other two British draft breeds.

In former years Suffolks were criticized by some Americans for their lack of scale and for being too light in bone for the size of the body. Of these faults the lack of body size is generally not so important a factor now owing to present-day tendencies to produce somewhat lighter and handier horses for farmwork purposes. Also it is the opinion of some Suffolk owners that, on account of general cleanness of leg, the smallness of bone is probably more apparent than real.

Suffolks were first imported into this country in the early eighties and have been imported since then in small numbers, possibly because of lack of size as compared with other draft breeds. Another reason that no more have been imported has probably been that they have

not been bred in very large numbers in England, being confined to a limited area, and the home demand of the farmers has been sufficient to take care of most of the animals produced; furthermore, buyers in other countries have purchased a good many at prices above those Americans would pay.

The Suffolks in this country are found in small numbers in a number of States, but have never gained any strong foothold, and conse-

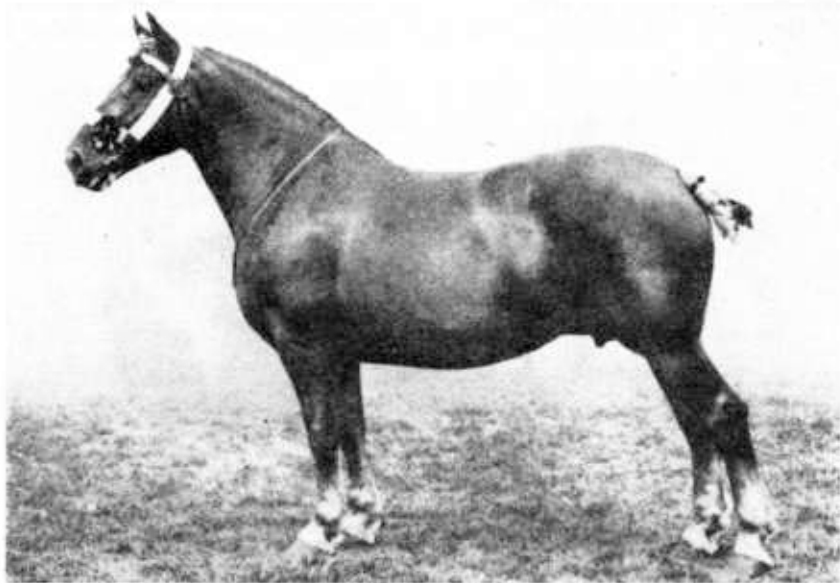


FIGURE 11.—Suffolk mare.

quently their adaptability to our conditions can scarcely be judged. The stallions have been crossed to some extent on mares in this country, but the demand for extreme size has prevented such crossing from being carried on sufficiently to judge of its value, except in a small way.

The American Suffolk Horse Association has issued five volumes of the Suffolk Horse Studbook, and to December 31, 1939, 2,120 animals had been registered. The secretary is L. B. Wescott, Mulhocracy Farm, Clinton, N. J.